
BOOK REVIEW

M. K. Mishra, *ERAI ERAI, Multilingual Education in Tribal Schools of India: Voices from Below*. Delhi: Manak Publications, 2024, 183 pp., Rs. 1,500 (Hardback), ISBN 9789391897857

Reviewed by Humaira Mariyam B.

The book documents the teaching and learning process and experience of using tribal languages in schools in the tribal areas of Odisha to improve the literacy levels of students. The book details the promotion and preservation of tribal languages through a Multilingual Education Framework (MLE) to improve the conditions of the education system for tribal children. This work is a notable contribution to bridging the gap between the theory and practice of MLE by offering pedagogical strategies for teaching languages that are not mainstream and standardised.

The book is divided into nine chapters, has a section explaining various abbreviations used, and includes the map of Odisha showing districts adopted in MLE. The introduction elucidates the need for mother-tongue education through MLE. This included the personal journey of the author and the survey in Odisha, which revealed the existing linguistic issue in the education system and the significant ratio of tribal students in Odisha, which required demolishing the monolingual ideology.

Chapters One and Two provide the backdrop of the study by mapping the ground realities and discussing the policy frameworks. The first chapter discusses the social conditions and learning environments of tribal children to map the ground realities, existing issues and challenges through research and field experience. It suggests interventional strategies such as teacher training, teaching-learning materials in tribal languages specific to districts, including the community and tribal knowledge in learning and assigning tribal teachers in tribal schools who can relate to the children.

Chapter Two details the history of language education in India and examines the national education policies from 1966 to 2022 in the context of tribal education. It problematises the unrepresented tribal culture in the curriculum and the homogenisation of the mother tongue as Odia. It then explains the pathway from policy through practice in Odisha through the implementation of the MLE policy, which is the first in India.

Chapter Three presents the outcomes of a teachers' education movement in Odisha from 1997 to 2003. This movement was aimed to encourage teachers to rethink their traditional practices and become aware of the socio-cultural realities of the classroom and the importance of informal learning. It also connected the marginalised tribal language and culture, with the standardised state curriculum. Therefore, it led to the exploration of the inherent potential of tribal children, their language, rich culture, community engagement and experiential knowledge, as well as how these can be an asset in the school curriculum.

Chapter Four details the case study of a government project to educate Saora children (one of the tribes in Odisha) in their mother tongue. It analyses the teaching and learning materials adopted for education through a constructivist perspective and shows improved learning outcomes and decreased dropout rates. The chapter also explains the various schools of thought and educational theories such as Experientialism, Constructivism, and Socio-cultural theory.

Chapter Five defines a community and its importance in creating a culture and promoting experiential learning. It brings to the forefront the assimilation of the marginalised into the mainstream and how the community and its culture get dissolved. Therefore, a reformed curriculum was prepared within the MLE framework, which positively impacted the children.

Chapter Six records the linkages between the community and school and examines how Srujan (creativity), as a cluster approach, has significantly promoted solidarity through child-centric activities. This encouraged everyone in the community to work together for children's education, which reduced exclusion, prejudices, and differences in caste, gender, class and language. It also fostered culturally responsive learning as the school became a centre for interaction between the community, teachers, and children.

Chapter Seven explains the thematic approach in education which integrates various subjects like an interconnected web under a common topic or theme. Such thematic approaches enhance active learning and comprehension in a multilingual education setting. Due to its openness, many elements such as languages, cultures and environment can be included, leading to a more culturally responsive curriculum. The chapter elucidates Chhattisgarh's socio-linguistic and educational scenario and discusses the thematic approach adopted in various

schools.

Chapter Eight explains MLE as a multi-disciplined composition that includes the linguistic, socio-cultural, and cognitive domains. The chapter underscores the cruciality of teacher education in enabling the teachers to understand post-formal psychology and the knowledge the children learn and experience from their community and relate it with formal education. Further, the chapter elucidates the paradigm shift from the traditional to the MLE framework in Nepal, a multilingual and multicultural country.

Chapter Nine presents the author's findings concerning children's literature, which is built on community knowledge and the involvement of tribal children. It illustrates various genres of children's oral literature, such as myths, riddles and local legends that directly impact children's association with their environment. The author argues that only a few written stories are familiar to teachers and students. In contrast, the older men and women of the community know many exciting stories. He recommends using the stories as learning materials in schools. He ends the book with an encouragement to initiate storytelling sessions in schools by exhibiting some of the anecdotes from such sessions carried out in schools.

The book is an essential contribution to MLE in India as it not only discusses the theoretical features but also gives a detailed account of the historical development and changes, the practical challenges in its implementation, and the positive outcomes of the case studies. The book foregrounds the cruciality of MLE and incorporates the social, cultural, historical, psychological and linguistic context of the learner's community as resource materials in the teaching and learning process. The book challenges the status quo by proving the richness of community knowledge. Its clear description, with the help of images, anecdotes, data, and notes, makes it easily understandable to anyone, including those unfamiliar with the Indian context. Therefore, this book can guide teachers who deal with diverse students and students from marginalised and tribal communities.

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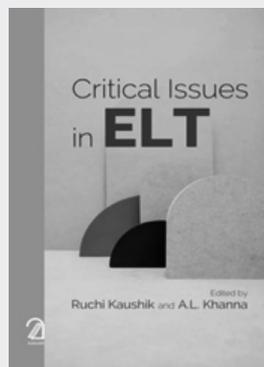
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CRITICAL ISSUES IN ELT

Ruchi Kaushik & A.L. Khanna (eds.)

ISBN 9789350027721, Hardbound, 2022, Rs. 1095

ELT has moved beyond primary concerns related to developing learners' proficiency in the language and designing curricula, syllabi, materials and assessment tools for the same. It is witnessing rapid developments towards de-centralizing and de-elitizing English, promoting multilingual approaches for teaching English and bridging the gap between language-in-education policies and practices. The challenge that the English teaching profession faces today is to find ways of serving the social aspirations of the marginalized to acquire English by using learners' home languages as assets rather than liabilities in language learning. *Critical Issues in ELT* is a collection of well researched articles by English language scholars who engage in such contemporary debates on the teaching and learning of English more specifically in India.

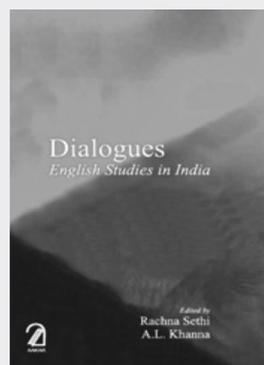


DIALOGUES: ENGLISH STUDIES IN INDIA

Rachna Sethi & A.L. Khanna (eds.)

ISBN 9789350026267, Hardbound, 2019, Rs. 595

Dialogues: English Studies in India brings forth a collection of interviews on a wide range of topics concerning English academia from translation to interdisciplinarity to teaching writing. The interviews cover the global breadth, including English professionals from US, UK and other countries, and different parts of India. By bringing together conversations where both the interview and the interviewer are academics, the anthology places before the readers multifarious voices discussing and interrogating policy and practice pertaining to English studies. The cogent arguments and thinking aloud coalesce in the fluid space of the dialogue, and the reader is invited to enter this interactive thought-process. By focussing on areas of (re)defining English Studies, pedagogical practices, professional development of teachers and possible future directions, *Dialogues* invites discussions and deliberations in these areas.





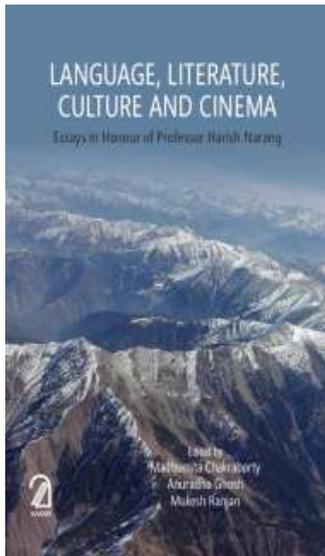
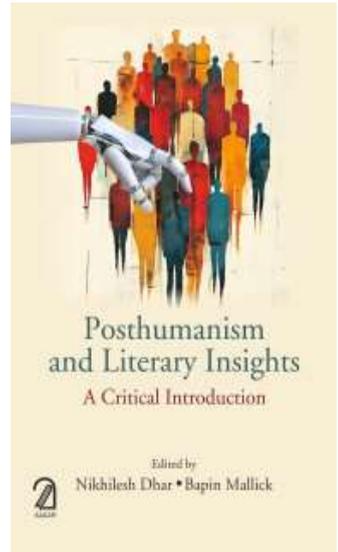
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POSTHUMANISM AND LITERARY INSIGHTS: A Critical Introduction

Edited by **Nikhilesh Dhar & Bapin Mallick**

ISBN 9789350028766, Hardcover, Rs.995

This edited volume examines contemporary issues, such as environmental crisis, disability, posthumanism, animal rights and memory archiving by erasing the distinction between human (authority) and non-human (margin). It scrutinizes European humanism and its role in Western modernity. The twenty-two articles by distinguished scholars offer a unique engagement with concept of the posthuman. It includes topics, such as posthuman geography and disability issues, ecological concerns and anthropocentrism, cultural changes and gender stereotyping, etc. The volume enriches the understanding of the ever-evolving concept of the posthuman. This book serves as an invaluable resource not only for scholars and academicians but also for students across various higher educational institutions, both in India and abroad. Its exploration of posthumanism and literary perspectives promises to enrich academic discourse and inspire new avenues of research and thought.



LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, CULTURE AND CINEMA: Essays in Honour of Professor Harish Narang

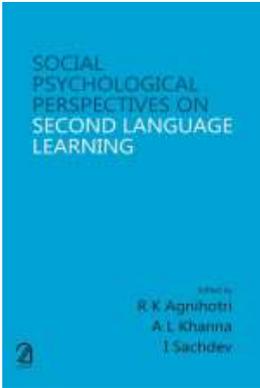
Edited by **Madhumita Chakraborty, Anuradha Ghosh, Mukesh Ranjan**

ISBN 9789350028919, Hardcover, Rs.1695

This collection of essays *Language, Literature, Culture and Cinema*, has been curated with great pleasure to honour Professor Harish Narang, former Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, by his former students. It manifests the profound influence Professor Narang's scholarship has had on them and many others in the given domain of learning. This collection is a testament to the rich tapestry of interdisciplinary inquiry that Professor Narang has espoused throughout his academic career. The essays in this volume forays into language, literature, culture and cinema studies in critical and comparative terms. The major themes explored are readings of literary productions in Indian languages and their translation into English, African writings in English, writings from the Indian diaspora, literature from the margins, popular cultural texts, folk literary and cultural practices, literature and the allied arts, literature and ethics on the lines

of caste, class, gender and ethnicity. One of the highlights of this volume is the reflections of Professor Narang as an author and as an academic, whose creative, critical and translated works in English and Hindi makes him a unique bilingual intellectual of our times. Each contribution offers a unique perspective that throws light on the connections and complexities embodied in these disciplines.

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SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Edited by R K Agnihotri, A L Khanna, I Sachdev

ISBN 9789350029015, Paperback, Rs.595

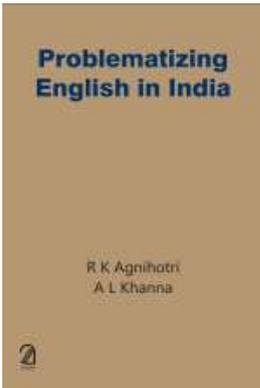
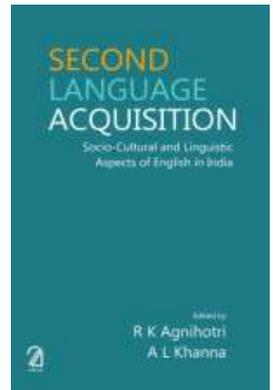
In recent decades scholars have increasingly become interested in the social and psychological aspects of second language learning and communication. This volume examines the role of these factors – especially those pertaining to attitude and motivation – in second language learning and communication in different socio-cultural settings. Each essay is thoroughly researched and theoretically sound, and captures the complexity of the milieu it describes. Offering a comprehensive range of social and psychological perspectives, it provides fresh inputs for those engaged in theorizing about second language learning.

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: Socio-Cultural and Linguistic Aspects of English in India

Edited by R K Agnihotri, A L Khanna

ISBN 9789350028995, Paperback, Rs.795

The book focuses on the socio-cultural and linguistic aspects of English in India. Among the major themes explored by the contributors are: *The role and place of English in India after independence *The emergence of indigenized varieties of English *Phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects of Indian English *Curriculum design and pedagogical practices suitable for Indian learners of English *Second language Acquisition *Implications of Chomsky’s innate hypothesis for language teaching *Multilingual education and literacy.



PROBLEMATIZING ENGLISH IN INDIA

R K Agnihotri, A L Khanna

ISBN 9789350029114, Paperback, Rs.595

The book empirically examines the status, role and functions of English in India in a historical and socio-psychological perspective. According to the authors, English is in a paradoxical situation in India, enmeshed as it is in a variety of different situations. Indeed, English is the vehicle of upward social mobility. Against this background, the author provides a critical examination of the place of English in India from the time it was introduced in the country. They also deconstruct the imperial ethos that gave English the position of power it finds itself in today.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN INDIA: Issues and Innovations

Edited by R K Agnihotri, A L Khanna

ISBN 9789350029028, Paperback, Rs.995

The book comprises articles by teachers of English and applied linguistics which are divided into six sections: problematizing ELT in India; the nature of ELT materials; learners profiles; classroom issues; course evaluation and teacher development; and curriculum change. They analyse a wide range of pedagogical, historical and social issues relating to the teaching of English in India including the nature of the materials being used, the needs, achievements and socio-psychological aspects of learners; the factors affecting learning in the classroom; and the problems involved in bringing about a change in the curriculum

